



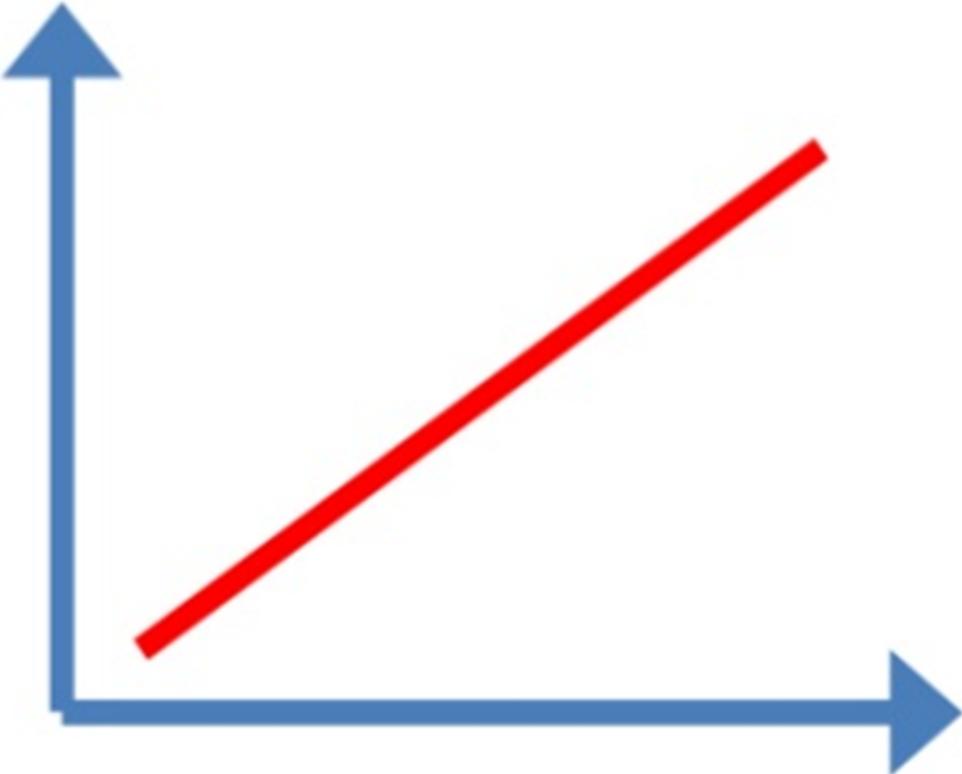
WE'RE HANGING OUT  
THE WASHING ON THE POVERTY LINE!

**John-Mark McCafferty, Head of Social Justice  
Society of St. Vincent de Paul**



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

**Problems**



**Income  
inequality**



# The Spirit Level

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## Why Equality is Better for Everyone

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Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett

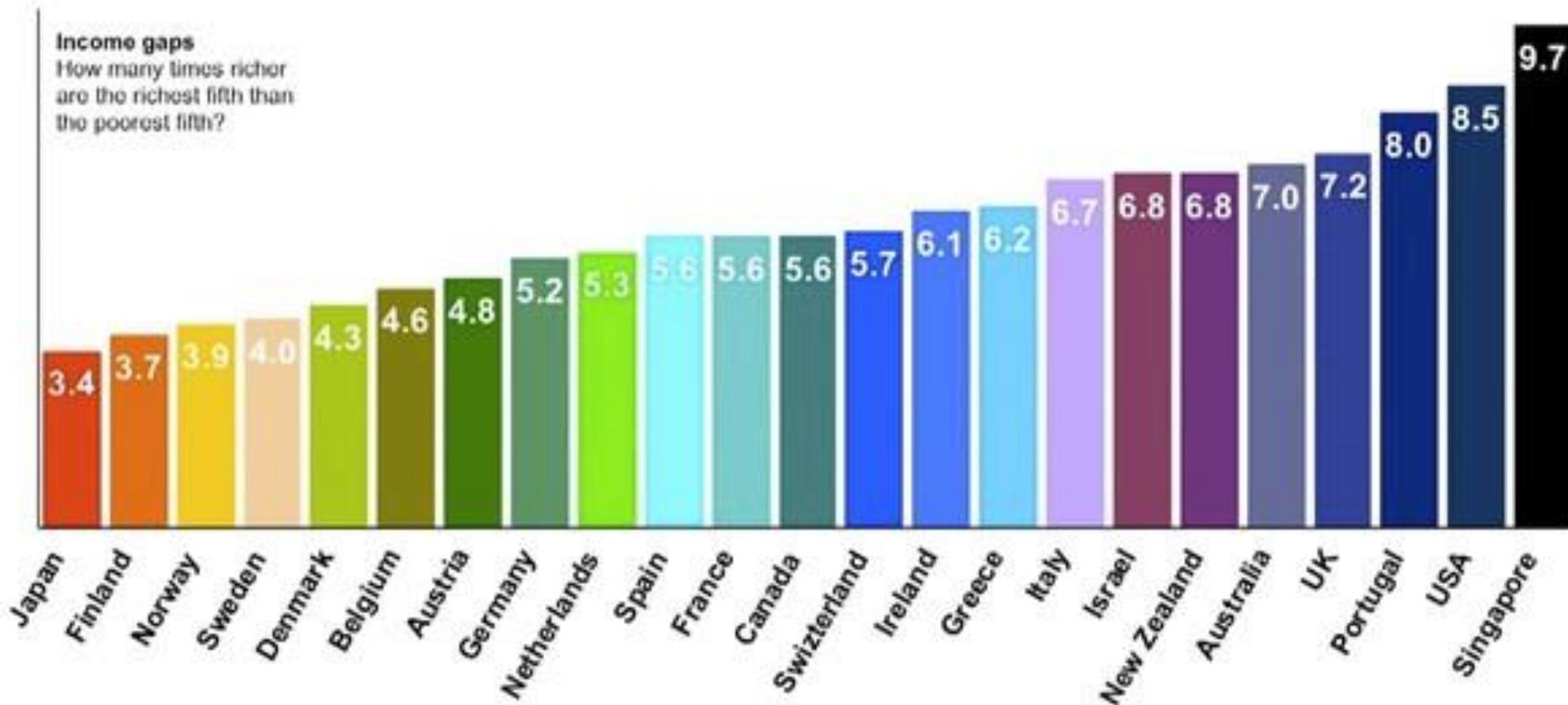
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'A big idea, big enough to change political thinking'  
*Sunday Times*

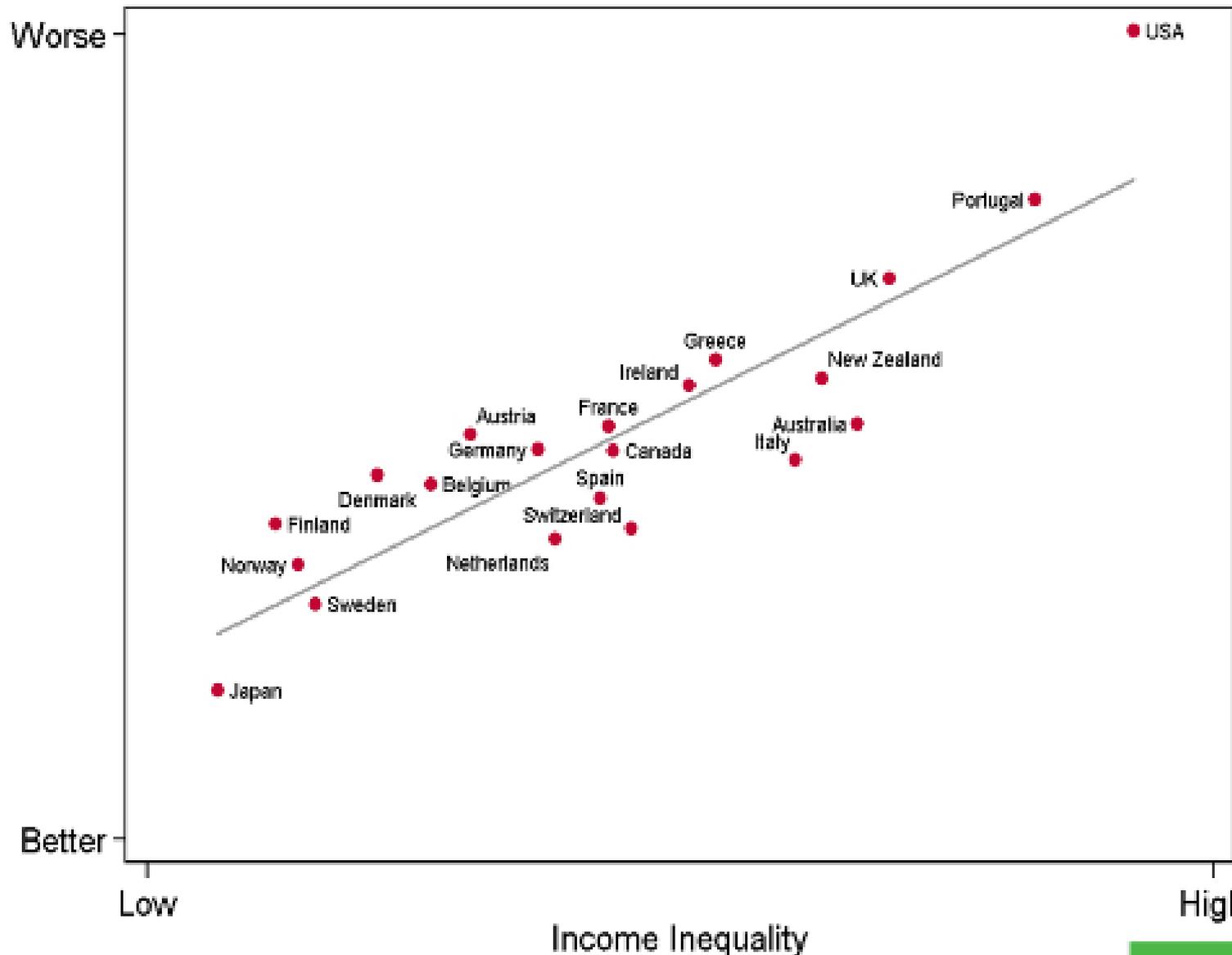
'A sweeping theory of everything' *Guardian*



# How much richer are the richest 20% in each country than the poorest 20%?

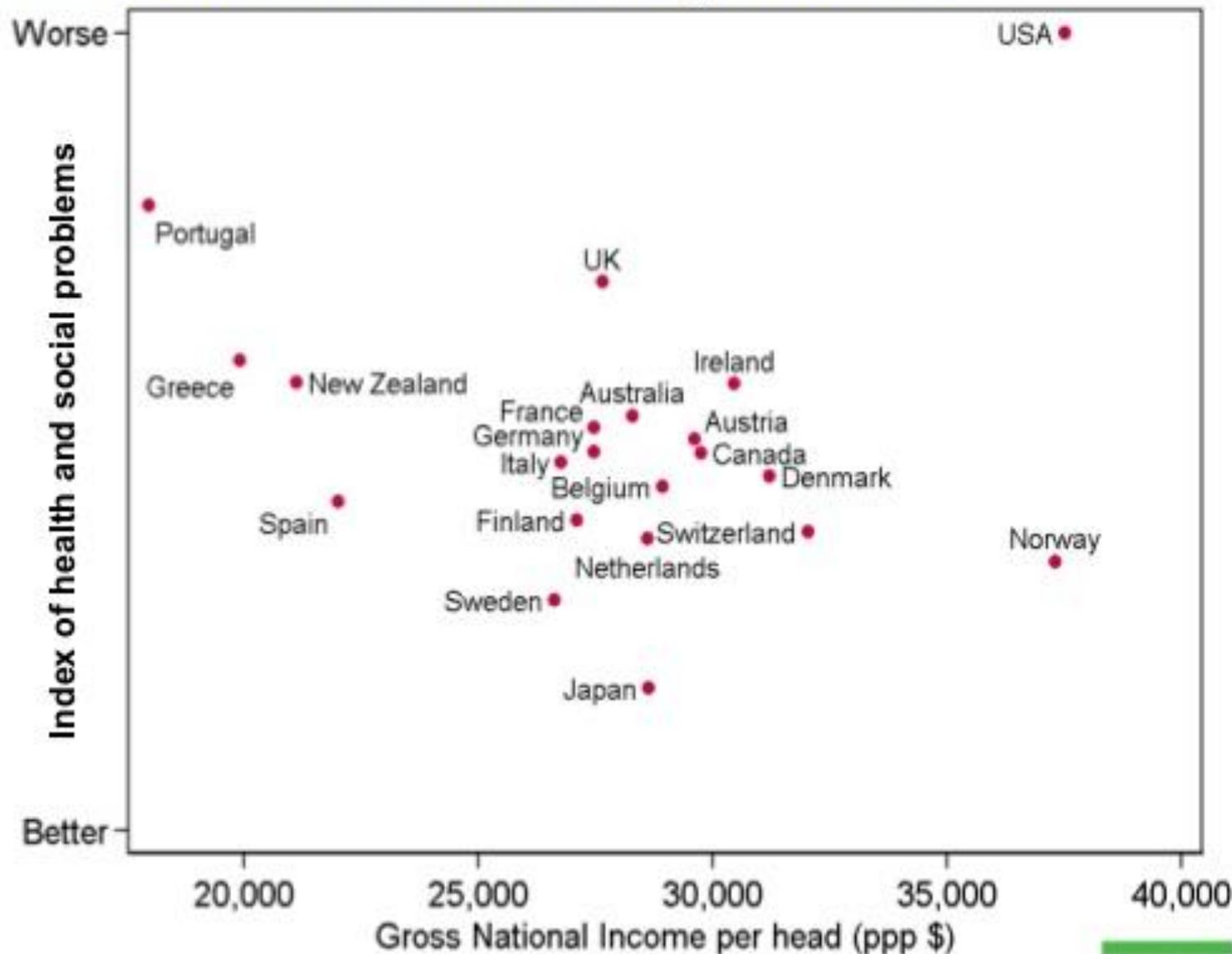


# Health and social problems are worse in more unequal countries



- Index of:
- Life expectancy
  - Math & Literacy
  - Infant mortality
  - Homicides
  - Imprisonment
  - Teenage births
  - Trust
  - Obesity
  - Mental illness – incl. drug & alcohol addiction
  - Social mobility

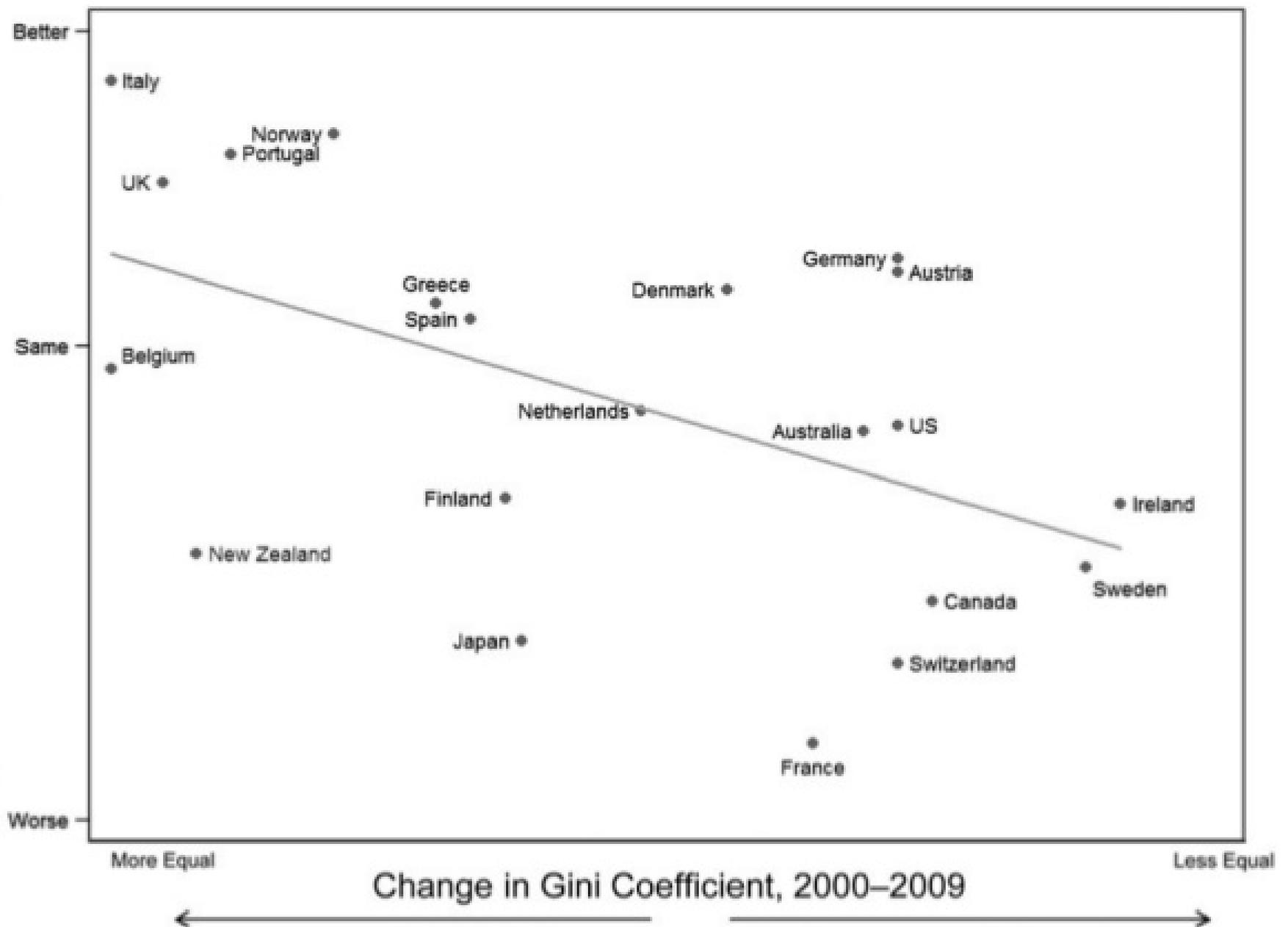
# Neither health nor social problems are related to national income per head



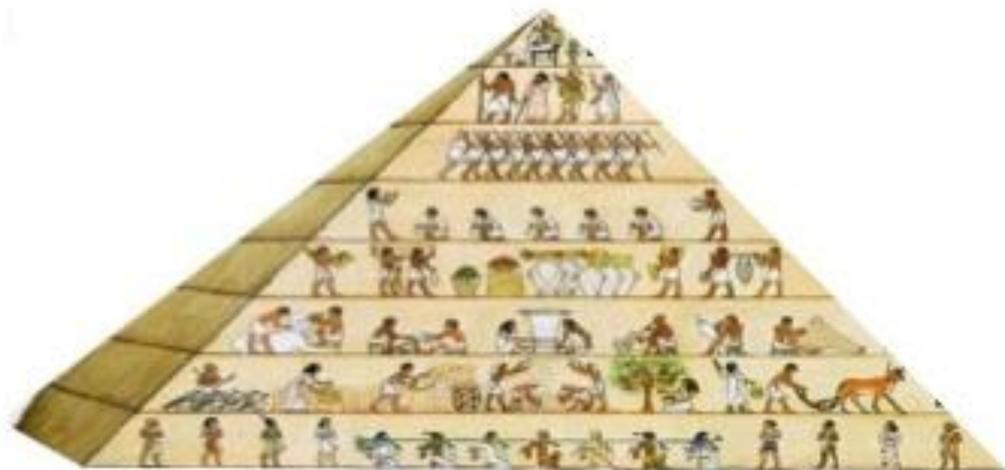
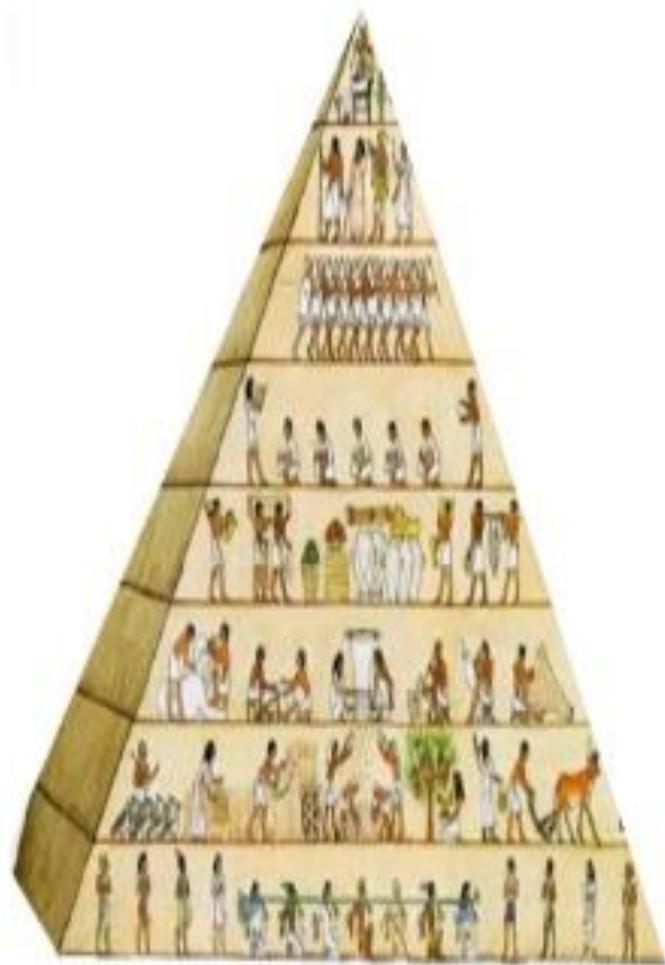
## Index of:

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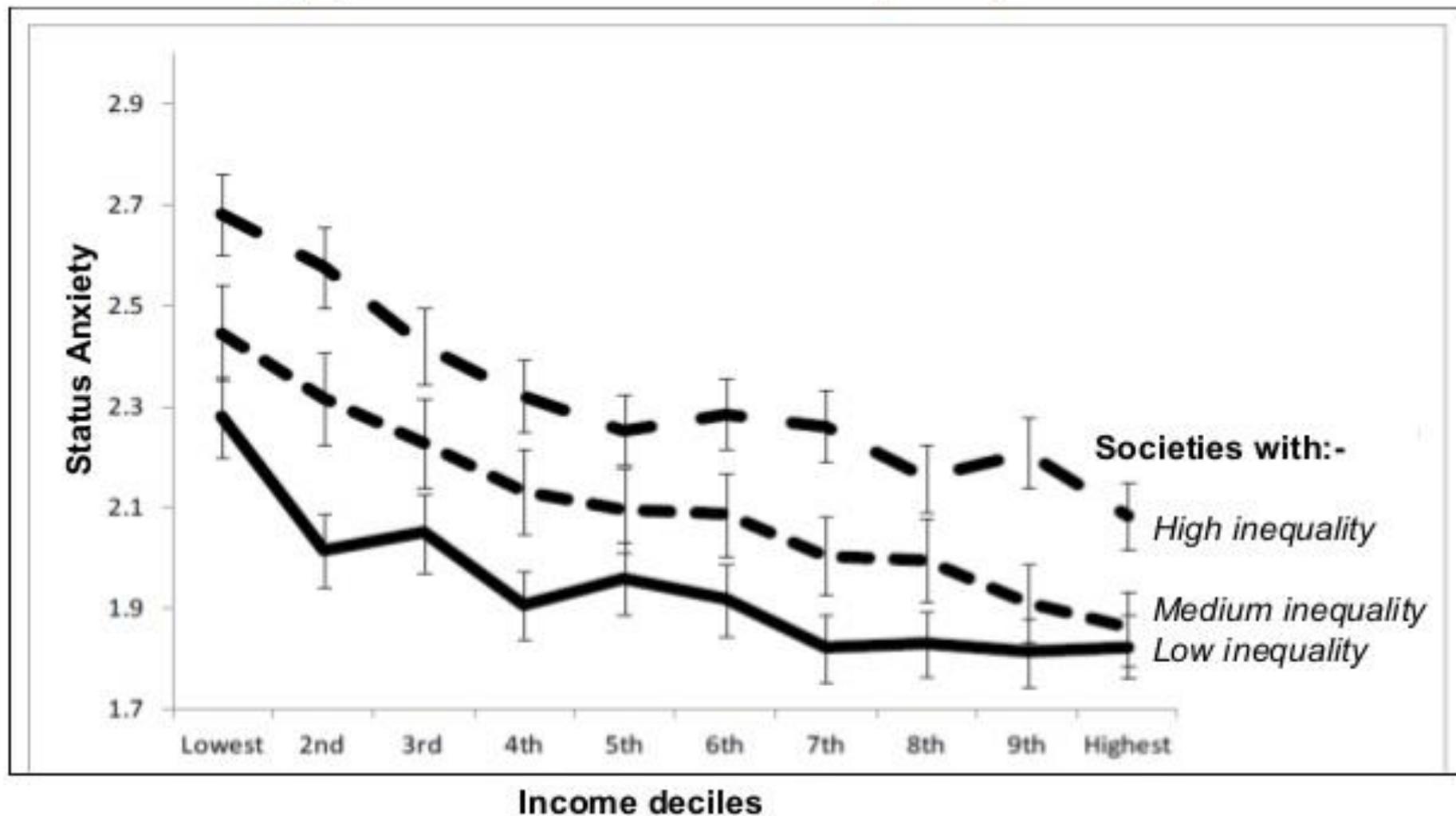
Change in UNICEF Index of Child Well-being, 2007–2013



**Bigger material differences create bigger social distances and increase social class differentiation**

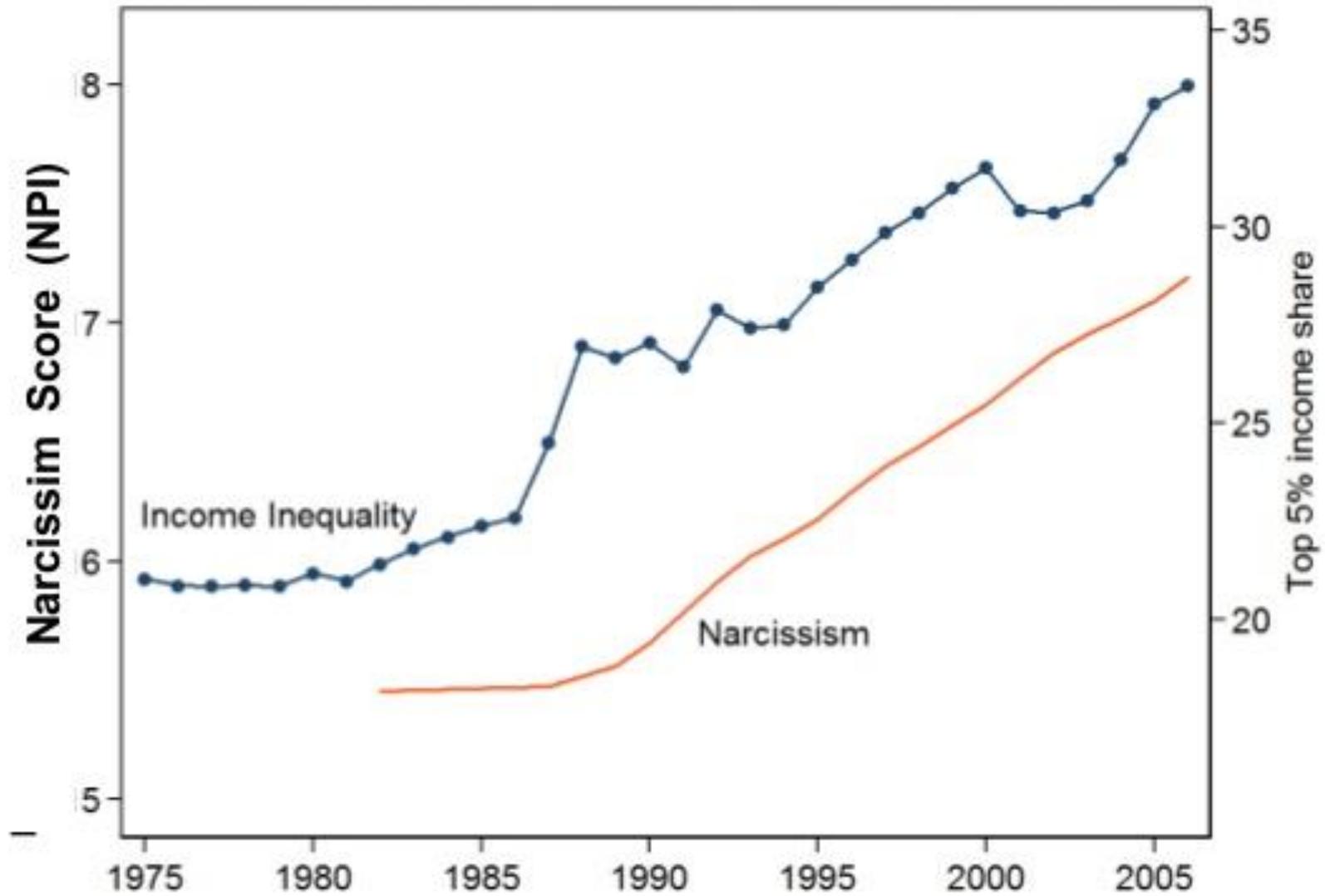


## Status Anxiety across income deciles for high, medium and low inequality countries



Layte R, Whelan CT. Who Feels Inferior? A Test of the Status Anxiety Hypothesis of Social Inequalities in Health. *European Sociological Review*, 2014.

# Rising Narcissism & Income Inequality in the USA



Inequality data from World Top Incomes Database  
Narcissism data from Twenge JM, et al., Journal of Personality 2008; 76(4): 875-901.

# On everyday life on a low income

“...things that would keep me awake at night are worrying about feeding the kids and clothing them.”

# Managing household income and expenditure

“...You have to get the groceries in and you have to pay the rent... You are going to fall behind somewhere...”



## On debt and access to affordable credit

“...I hate having that debt hanging around. It’s impossible to plan for the future...”



## On the impact of austerity

“...that 10 euro would have bought two packs of nappies. It would have fed us for the day... It would go a long way for your milk bill...”



# On Energy Poverty

“ ... [during] the very cold spell...that’s all we had was those heaters...Oh my God the doors we had...there was a big gap. You could see out on the street. I went around the house doing my own little thing... hot water bottles for the kids...”



## On education costs

“...[The school has] a book rental scheme and it’s 80 euro for the books and you’ve to pay 30 [euro] then for photocopying and all that...”

## On food poverty

“...It has been hard...to get healthy stuff for the children... where you buy cheap stuff...is generally the stuff that is high in fat and sugar and white refined carbohydrates, and it’s kind of filling and you get a big basket full of stuff, and it’s not very good for you...”



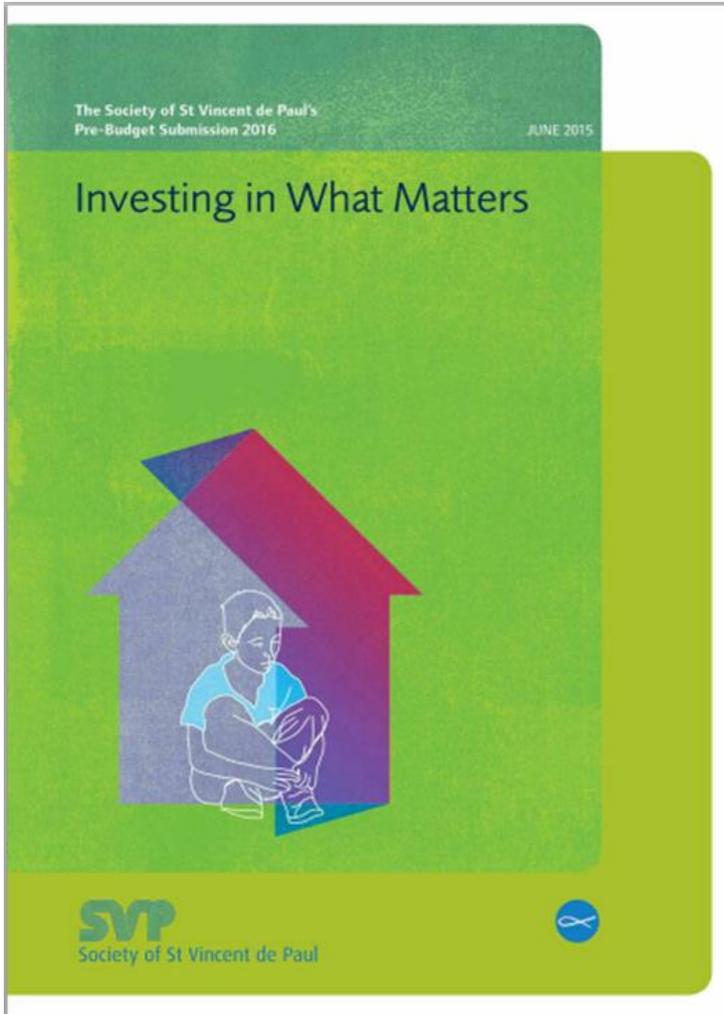
# On poverty's effect on Children

“...When the kids would be asking...can they go places, on a Saturday... I'd love to be able to bring them to the cinema or bring them to the play-ground.

I can't...”



## Policy Solutions



- Invest in Housing Supply and Access
- Home energy costs need to be addressed
- Early Childhood Education and Care, After School Care
- An Income Policy for Children, Families, Households